UNITED NATIONS

# ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1986/38
22 October 1985

Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-second session

Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION IN ALL COUNTRIES OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE HUMAN RIGHTS

PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE RIGHT TO ENJOY AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING; THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

Note by the Secretary-General

1. By resolution 1985/42 of 14 March 1985, the Commission on Human Rights invited the Directors-General of the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization to draw up and submit to the Commission at its forty-second session a concise report on the state of implementation of the rights to work, food, education and health, respectively, so that the Commission could undertake a global assessment of the progress being made and the problems being encountered in the implementation of these human rights.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION [Original: FRENCH]

[13 September 1985]

Report on the state of implementation of the right to work prepared by the International Labour Office in response to the request of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1985/42

In the declaration of aims and objectives, the Constitution of the ILO recognizes the Organisation's responsibility to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve:

(a) full employment and the raising of standards of living;

(b) the employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainments and make their greatest contribution to the common well-being;

(c) the provision, as a means to the attainment of this end and under adequate guarantees for all concerned, of facilities for training and the transfer of labour, including migration for employment and settlement."

The preparation of international labour conventions and recommendations and the verification of their implementation constitute one of the principal means whereby ILO seeks to attain these objectives. These instruments include, by category:

A. Employment policy

The Employment Policy Convention (No. 122) and Recommendation (No. 122), 1964;

The Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation (No. 169), 1984;

B. Vocational guidance and training:

Human Resources Development Convention (No. 142) and Recommendation (No. 150), 1975;

C. Manpower services:

Employment Service Convention (No. 88) and Recommendation (No. 83), 1948;

D. Freedom of choice of employment:

Forced Labour Convention (No. 29), 1930;

Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105), 1957;

E. Equality of opportunity and treatment for access to employment:

Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), 1958;

The Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (No. 143), 1957, and the Recommendation on Migrant Workers (No. 151), 1975, also contain provisions on this question;

F. Protection against unfair dismissal:

Termination of Employment Convention (No. 158) and Recommendation (No. 166), 1966;

G. Protection against unemployment:

Unemployment Provision Convention (No. 44), 1934;

The Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention (No. 102), 1952, and the above-mentioned instruments on termination of employment also contain provisions on unemployment benefits.

The provisions contained in these instruments are indicative of the various aspects of labour law and the range of policies, programmes, legal measures and administrative arrangements which the implementation of that law necessarily entails. Economic policies must be designed to guarantee sufficient productive employment opportunities for all those seeking employment; measures must be taken to afford every worker, without discrimination, every opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to occupy a post of his choice and to make use of his skills and aptitudes in his work; as far as possible, a balance must be achieved between labour supply and demand and machinery set up to inform those seeking employment of the employment opportunities open to them; the free choice of employment should not be impaired by coercion or arbitrary exclusion; provision should be made for protection against unemployment, both through measures to find new employment for the unemployed as rapidly as possible, and by ensuring an income during the period of forced unemployment.

The question of the right to work was considered by the International Labour Conference in the course of discussions culminating in the adoption of Recommendation No. 169, which supplemented earlier instruments on employment policy. In the preamble to this recommendation, it is recalled that the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights provides for the recognition of, inter alia, "the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts", and for the taking of appropriate steps to achieve progressively the full realization of, and to safeguard, this right.

Paragraph 1 of the recommendation states that the promotion of full, productive and freely chosen employment provided for in the Employment Policy Convention and Recommendation (No. 122) should be regarded as the means of achieving in practice the realization of the right to work. Paragraph 2 further states that full recognition by Members of the right to work should be linked with the implementation of economic and social policies, the purpose of which is the promotion of these objectives.

An ILO note on "The concept of the right to work in international law" and an article on "The concept of the right to work in international standards and the legislation of ILO member States" published in the International Labour Review (Vol. 124, No. 2, March-April 1985, pages 225 to 241) contain more detailed information on these questions.

ILO has also introduced various procedures for monitoring the implementation of international labour standards as a whole, including those relating to employment. In particular, Governments must, under the Constitution of the Organisation, report periodically on measures taken to implement conventions which they have ratified. The reports must also be communicated to national employers' and workers' organizations. The reports received are subjected to a technical examination by an independent body, the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. They are then discussed at a tripartite meeting of a special committee established each year by the International Labour Conference.

In the general section of its report, the Committee of Experts regularly analyses the main trends in employment and makes recommendations on the types of policies and measures which it considers have or might have positive effects for employment.

The Committee of Experts has also been called upon to report on the progress achieved in implementing the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The Employment Policy Convention and Recommendation (No. 122) served as the starting point for the World Employment Programme launched by ILO in 1969 and involving large-scale research (see "Bibliography of Published Research of the World Employment Programme", English only, fifth edition, 1984, and supplement), as well as assistance to member States.

The aims of the programme are two-fold - to make the mass productive employment a major objective of national and international development policies and to assist member States in formulating and implementing action plans to achieve that aim. In 1976, ILO convened a World Employment Conference, which adopted a Declaration of Principles and a Programme of Action. 1/ All of this work served to highlight the links between the promotion of employment, the distribution of income and the international division of labour. It also helped to pinpoint the satisfaction of such basic needs as nutrition, housing, clothing, drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health services, education opportunities and cultural activities as priority objectives of national development policy, jointly with employment promotion. Subsequently, at its June 1979 session, the International Labour Conference considered the follow-up to the World Employment Conference, the conclusions of which it reaffirmed and up-dated. 2/ The practical activities of ILO in the area of employment continue to be guided by the decisions of the World Employment Conference and the International Labour Conference at its 1979 session.

Information on the practical activities of ILO in 1983 in the areas of employment and training can be found in document GB.228/OP/1/4 of the ILO Governing Body (paragraphs 170 to 230). In addition, the ILO Programme and Budget for 1986-1987, which has recently been adopted, attaches great importance to the major employment and training programmes (programmes 60 and 70).

In particular, in response to the increasingly serious concerns expressed by the International Labour Conference on the effect on employment of world economic trends and the national and international measures taken in order to adjust to them, a high-level meeting is planned for the near future to consider the impact of international trade, financial and monetary policies on employment and poverty. The idea behind the meeting is to bring together ministers or senior civil servants of ministries of labour, finance and planning, trade-union and employers' leaders and heads of secretariats or senior officials of such international agencies as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, GATT, UNCTAD and OECD. The theme of the meeting will be the promotion of employment,

---

1/ See report of the Director-General to the Conference, entitled Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A One-World Problem, Geneva, ILO, 1976, and the Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action adopted by the Conference (ILO Official Bulletin, volume LX, 1977, Series A, No. 2, page 82).

2/ See the resolution adopted on 27 June 1979 concerning follow-up to the World Employment Conference (ILO Official Bulletin, volume LXII, 1979, Series A, No. 2, page 95).

structural adjustments and equity in a changing world, and its purpose will be to launch a dialogue on general policy between international institutions responsible for economic and financial policies having a direct impact on levels of employment and income, and high-level decision-makers representing governments, employers and workers.

The scale of unemployment and underemployment continues to give cause for concern, despite the efforts made at the national and international levels. ILO is fully aware that it cannot solve a problem of such magnitude alone. Its role in this field is essentially to mobilize the political will to act in order to solve the problem, to draw attention to the nature and causes of the employment problem, and to assist in planning and implementation of general policies and programmes for the creation of short-term and long-term employment (approximately one-third of ILO's technical co-operation is aimed at this objective). Specifically in regard to the industrialized countries, the Organisation is active in four areas of special importance: unemployment among the young; duration of work and employment; international trade and adjustment policies; and new technologies and employment.

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1986/38/Corr.1
9 January 1986

CHINESE AND ENGLISH ONLY

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-second session
Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

# QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION IN ALL COUNTRIES OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE HUMAN RIGHTS

# PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE RIGHT TO ENJOY AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING; THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

Note by the Secretary-General

## Corrigendum

Page 1

After paragraph 1 insert the following paragraphs:

2. The present document contains the report of the International Labour Organisation submitted in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution.

3. All the sources cited in the report were submitted by the ILO separately. They are kept in the files of the Secretariat and can be made available upon request.

4. Relevant reports prepared by other specialized agencies concerned will be issued as addenda to the present document.

Page 3

In the first paragraph, second line, the words "aspects of labour law" should read "aspects of the right to work".

GE.86-10069

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1986/38/Add.1
5 November 1985

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-second session

Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

# QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION IN ALL COUNTRIES OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE HUMAN RIGHTS

## PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE RIGHT TO ENJOY AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING; THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

The present document contains the report of the World Health Organization submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1985/42.

GE.85-14047

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

[Original: English]
[26 August 1985]

1. The common social goal of Health for All by the Year 2000, jointly accepted by the Member States of the World Health Organization in 1977, was the beginning of a new international health order.

2. Health for All means that people will be closely involved in shaping their own health, in preventing disease and alleviating unavoidable illness and disability. It means essential care will be accessible to all individuals and families, close to where they live and work. It means that people will realize that they have the power to shape their own lives and that of their families - that illness is not inevitable, that they could be free from the burdens of disease.

3. Health for All also means the removal of obstacles to health such as ignorance, malnutrition, unsafe drinking water, pollution, an unhealthy environment and unhygienic housing. It is a holistic concept which calls for efforts in agriculture, industry, education, housing and communications just as much as in medicine and public health.

4. The political will to attain the goal of health for all undoubtedly exists in a large majority of countries. Many countries are taking action to achieve universal coverage of their population through primary health care. Others are in the process of reorienting their national health system towards the primary health care approach.

5. The principles of primary health care that were defined in the Declaration of Alma Ata (1978) include increasing people's awareness of the decisive role they can play in promoting and maintaining their own health as well as reorienting the training of health workers to deal with matters that are of greatest concern to the people they are to serve.

6. The right and duty of people to participate in developing national health systems has gained wide recognition. A number of Governments are encouraging their people to become involved in their own health development. There are encouraging trends of greater involvement of communities in their own health care.

7. But serious difficulties still remain in many areas. The problem of mobilization of adequate resources continues to be a major challenge. Inadequacy of infrastructure as well as inadequate quantity and quality of appropriately trained manpower pose major difficulties in many countries. They are facing practical problems in building up health system infrastructures based on the principles of primary health care.

8. In general, information is lacking with respect to many of the social, economic and health indicators for assessing the world health situation. However, it is well known that a vast majority of people still have no access to effective health care and indeed to the essential basic needs of food, shelter, safe water for drinking and sanitation which form the essential elements of the quality of life. As a consequence, there is widespread undernutrition and malnutrition, prevalence of infectious diseases, high infant and maternal mortality and low

average expectation of life. Although smallpox has been eradicated, there are still other widely spread preventable diseases - tuberculosis, malaria, schistosomiasis, leprosy, diarrhoea, tetanus, whooping cough, diphtheria, measles and poliomyelitis.

9. At the same time, there is a wide disparity between health conditions of people in developed and developing countries. In the developing countries themselves there is a striking disparity between urban and rural areas in patterns of health problems, in access to health services and attendant morbidity and mortality. The limited coverage of the health services particularly of the rural populations, the shortage of essential drugs and the lack of trained health manpower are only some of the main problems of the rural areas.

10. However, despite existing problems and difficulties, despite overwhelming odds and formidable challenges, the unanimity of Member States to work within an agreed policy framework for the specific objective of health for all and to strive to translate these policies into practice in their own country is a major step forward.

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1986/38/Add.2
16 December 1985

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-second session

Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

# QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION IN ALL COUNTRIES OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE HUMAN RIGHTS

## PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE RIGHT TO ENJOY AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING; THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

The present document contains the report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1985/42.

GE.85-14108

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

/Original: English/

/30 October 1985/

# Hunger and Starvation

## Contribution by FAO

### The problem

1. The present tragedies in Ethiopia and in other parts of Africa only show that, even 10 years after the World Food Conference of 1974, the world lacks an adequate world food security system. Food supplies remain vulnerable to the effects of droughts, floods and other disasters. Over nine million refugees crowd many developing nations, stretching meagre supplies even thinner. Meanwhile, chronic hunger and malnutrition persist even in years of good harvest.

2. Over 500 million people are undernourished because food production is inadequate, distribution unreliable and because, being poor, they lack the economic means to purchase or produce enough to eat.

3. These people, and the many more whose food supply is barely adequate or unstable, have difficulty breaking out of this situation on their own. The rural poor cannot purchase the inputs, such as fertilizer and seeds, they need to increase food and agricultural production. Many are landless, eking out a survival from occasional paid work.

4. On a wider level, the Governments of the countries most affected by hunger and rural poverty find themselves in a position similar to that of their people. The poorest countries depend mainly on their export earnings from agricultural commodities, the world prices for which have fallen in recent years. The little foreign exchange they earn is needed to service debt and to buy essential goods. On the other hand, many of them must also import food to feed their increasing populations, particularly in urban areas.

5. The problem is not going to disappear with current rates of economic growth. Even where rising demand is being slowly satisfied, which is generally the case, large numbers of poor and hungry people remain.

6. In Africa, which accounts for 26 out of the 36 countries classified as least developed by the United Nations, the situation is getting worse: per capita food production actually fell about 10 per cent in a decade and several countries were unable to increase imports enough to offset the decline. Africa has not only had to cope with a population increasing more rapidly than any other developing region; but also sustained production is made difficult by poor soils and a difficult climate - for example, drought has ravaged the continent almost continuously since the early 1970s. The region is particularly dependent on agricultural commodities for its exports, while the "green revolution" has had much less impact in Africa than, for example, in Asia.

Food production and distribution

7. Solving current food problems depends on two main factors: sustained increases in food production and more equitable access to food supplies.

8. World supplies of dietary energy are now about 10 per cent more than the nutritional requirements of the population. Even the supplies available in the developing countries would be nearly sufficient to meet domestic needs, if they were distributed strictly in accordance with these requirements. In fact, to a large extent, levels of income determine how food is distributed among the population. Thus some people, particularly in industrialized countries, consume more than their nutritional requirements, and many people, especially in developing countries, consume less.

9. Redistribution sufficient to eliminate hunger and malnutrition would entail massive reapportionment of income and natural resources both among and within countries - not necessarily a feasible undertaking. However, available food supplies can be redistributed through such measures as food aid, supplementary feeding programmes, selective subsidies, and low-price shops.

10. Therefore, the amounts of food produced must be increased, and significantly. A 4 per cent target for average yearly increases in the developing countries' food and agricultural production has been called for often: in 1970, in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade; in 1974, by the World Food Conference; in 1980, by the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

11. That goal remains widely unrealized. In the 10 years which have followed the World Food Conference of 1974, world food production increased annually by 2.2 per cent. With the exception of Asia and the Far East, the majority of developing regions have failed to achieve the minimum indicative goals of food production increases discussed by the World Food Conference. In 52 countries, representing 476 million people, food production did not keep pace with population growth.

12. However, the successes achieved also deserve notice. China, for example, has exceeded the food production goal. India has recently achieved self-sufficiency in cereals. Indonesia has eliminated its rice deficit.

13. By building their agricultural self-reliance, the developing countries can lessen their dependence on increasing food imports.

14. Efforts to increase food production also make it possible to involve far more people in food marketing processes. New jobs can be created in the rural sector.

15. FAO's study Agriculture: Toward 2000 indicates that the needed production increases are possible. They will, however, require increased financing.

16. The level of assistance to agriculture in 1983 at constant 1975 prices represented less than two thirds of the internationally-agreed estimate of annual requirements of $8,300 million at 1975 prices for the period 1975-1980. This was also only 42 per cent of the estimated requirements of $12,500 million (at 1975 prices) for 1990 as projected in the FAO study Agriculture: Toward 2000.

17. Although the le el of the assistance required might appear overwhelming, it is miniscule when compared to military spending which in 1984 was estimated at nearly $970 billion.

An agenda for the developing world

18. In order for the developing nations to expand their agricultural production as rapidly as they must, investments will be needed to expand and improve irrigation. While agricultural areas can still be extended without ecological damage in some areas, most of the growth in production must come from higher yields on land already in use. Agriculture must make much more use of chemical and organic fertilizers, improved seeds, and pesticides. Mechanization must be encouraged judiciously, where it will raise production and create off-farm employment.

19. For increased agricultural production to succeed in lessening hunger and malnutrition, depends to a very large extent on how it is done. Not only is people's participation in the institutions and systems which govern them a basic human right, but "Rural development strategies can realize their full potential only through the motivation, active involvement and organization at the grass-roots level of rural people, with special emphasis on the least advantaged". 1/ Many people who have until now been excluded - women, landless labourers, small farmers and fishers - must become deeply involved in the work and in the direction of the development process.

20. Government agricultural services, including research, education, extension, marketing and credit, must be reoriented to meet the needs of small producers. In many countries, agrarian reform would enable the rural poor to have access to and control over land and other productive resources. People's organizations through which rural people participate in development, should be encouraged and supported.

21. Reducing huge but avoidable food losses can greatly expand the available supplies. In 1977, the FAO Conference established an Action Programme for the Prevention of Food Losses which concentrates on basic foodstuffs in the farm and village. This can mean more food for the rural poor, by conserving supplies, including the large part that never enters the market. More efficient marketing and processing would also help resolve the dilemma of how to encourage producers without increasing prices to consumers too much.

The involvement of the industrialized world

22. Industrialized countries should give direct support to the efforts made by developing countries, and indirect support through the creation of an improved structure of international relations. Many needed changes were proposed in the Declaration and Programme of Action of a New International Economic Order, adopted by the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly in 1974. Unfortunately, progress toward implementation of these changes has been extremely slow.

---

1/ Report of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD), Programme of Action III, p. 8.

23. Most industrialized countries have not reached targets for resource flows. Only a few of the smaller industrialized countries have contributed 0.7 per cent of their GNP to official development assistance, meeting the long-standing international target.

24. Since 1974 the international community has accelerated its resource commitments and disbursements to the food and agriculture sector in response to the consensus achieved at the World Food Conference. None the less, the magnitude of resource flows, bilateral as well as multilateral, has remained short of widely acknowledged resource needs. In addition, ODA concessional commitments for food and agriculture declined in 1983 with a consequential effect on disbursements in the near future.

Providing and co-ordinating external aid

25. The largest single source of capital assistance for food and agriculture and for rural development is the World Bank. In recent years it has greatly increased its emphasis on these sectors, setting an example which other sources of assistance should follow.

26. FAO, through its Investment Centre, works closely with the World Bank and other external lending institutions, such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the African, Asian and Inter-American development banks in the identification and preparation of investment projects, while also providing technical assistance. In 1984, projects worth more than $2.3 billion for agricultural development in the Third World, particularly Africa, were generated by the Investment Centre.

27. Voluntary aid by non-governmental organizations has played an important part in meeting needs not covered by official assistance. Its flexibility and its ability to work closely with people's organizations make it an effective and creative type of assistance. The promotion of such voluntary efforts must be encouraged.

The role of trade

28. A large part of the export earnings of many developing countries still comes from food and other agricultural, fishery and forestry products.

29. Developing countries continue to encounter blocks to increasing their agricultural export earnings. These include protectionist measures by industrialized countries - their main markets - competition with synthetic substitutes, limited market access in the industrialized centrally planned economies. Their earnings are also highly unstable from year to year. Intergovernmental discussions and negotiations have considered these matters at length, for example in the successive rounds of multilateral Trade Negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, in the negotiations concerning UNCTAD's Integrated Programme for Commodities and a Common Fund to finance it, and in FAO's Intergovernmental Commodity Study Groups. Progress has generally been slow. Many attempts have been made to adopt and operate international agreements between importing and exporting countries for individual commodities. Few have been agreed, even fewer have lasted very long, and the economic provisions of some have remained inoperative for long periods.

30. Industrialized countries need to make a number of adjustments in order to absorb the potential export surpluses of the developing countries. While adding appreciably to the export earnings of the developing countries, reductions in protection would, in turn, substantially expand their demand for the industrialized countries' exports. Such policies would also benefit consumers in the industrialized countries through lower prices.

Food aid

31. Since the early 1950s, food aid has helped meet emergencies and supported nutritional programmes, food for work and development projects.

32. In 1974, the World Food Conference set a minimum target of food aid of 10 million tons of cereals a year (about 0.6 per cent of annual world production). Since then, progress achieved has been mixed.

33. A number of positive advances have been achieved. Over the decade, total food aid has increased significantly in real terms above the low level to which it had fallen in 1974. A new Food Aid Convention (FAC) was concluded in 1980 and extended in 1983 with a guaranteed minimum level of food aid of 7.6 million tons of grains, substantially higher than under the earlier FAC. The International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) of 500,000 tons of cereals a year, called for by the Seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, has become operational, and exceeded the target for its resources in 1981, 1983, 1984 and 1985.

34. Despite those significant advances, several shortcomings remain. The minimum annual food aid target of 10 million tons of grain established by the Conference has been attained only in the year July 1984-June 1985 as a result of the response to the exceptional food aid requirements of African countries facing severe food shortages. Forward planning of food aid on a multi-annual basis has been undertaken by only a small number of donors and on a limited scale. The ability of low-income countries to purchase their food import requirements on commercial terms has decreased.

World food security

35. The contrast between Africa battling against famine and richer nations struggling with surpluses throws into high profile the importance of world food security: all people at all times should have both physical and economic access to the basic food they need.

36. During the past decade, the notion of food security has been extended, reflecting shifts in perception of the world food problem as a whole. During the world food crisis of the early 1970s, international concern about improving world food security focused on measures to reduce price and supply instability in world markets. The World Food Conference in 1974 and the 1979 FAO Plan of Action on World Food Security therefore sought to ensure availability of food supplies in the event of widespread crop failure. Measures to alleviate instability in world cereal markets remains a priority for achieving world food security. However, these measures are not considered adequate to combat hunger in developing countries which is of a chronic rather than a temporary nature.

37. The FAO Committee on World Food Security therefore adopted in 1983 a revised concept of world food security which has since received widespread support by the international community. According to this concept, food security should have three specific aims: (a) increasing food production; (b) maximizing stability in food supplies and markets; and (c) ensuring access to supplies on the part of those who need them.

38. Many low-income food-deficit countries need to develop national preparedness programmes to cope with crop fluctuations and food disasters. These programmes should include an early warning system to give advance indications of potential crop failures. They should also contain a set of measures and procedures ready to be introduced in the event of serious crop failures, including emergency import programmes; identification of food reserves to be drawn upon until additional supplies arrive; and standby disaster units. Regional workshops on these issues have already been organized by FAO for the Asia and Pacific Region and for Africa.

39. FAO established its Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture on the recommendations of the 1974 World Food Conference. Its main objectives are to give a warning of impending changes in world food conditions, and to enhance the capacity of Governments and international organizations to take prompt and appropriate action to deal with emerging food shortages. FAO has also assisted in the establishment of national early warning systems in several countries, and regional groupings such as the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference.

40. The FAO Committee on World Food Security at its April 1984 session considered several specific proposals for action at national, regional and global levels for implementing the revised concept of world food security. It supported an interim system of national food reserves under which developed countries and others in a position to do so would earmark grain or funds for meeting the urgent import requirements of low-income food-deficit countries.

41. At its April 1985 session, the Committee considered the text of a World Food Security Compact which it had asked the Director-General to prepare. The Compact is intended to consolidate what has already been agreed upon in various fora concerning world food security. The Council and the Conference of FAO will now examine the document at their forthcoming sessions in 1985.

42. In the last 10 years and since the World Food Conference, some aspects of world food security have been improved. But much remains to be done. Food security problems will remain central in FAO's work and the Organization will continue to explore all possible approaches until the poorest and neediest of the world have dependable access to their basic food.

* * *

Concluding remarks

43. Malnutrition, hunger and famine will continue to afflict human societies, and will grow worse, unless there is an informed and continuing attack on their causes and their effects. Agriculture must become a first priority in the developing world. Wherever absolute poverty exists it must be eliminated. Justice and peace cannot co-exist with widespread hunger.

44. The struggle to end hunger will take many resources, and consistent effort. As a leader of those efforts FAO has worked to eradicate hunger and to bring decent living conditions to rural people. In spite of its limited resources - FAO's entire budget from its inception to the present day amounts to about one-half of the cost of a nuclear submarine - it will continue to battle the problem of food on all fronts, in partnership with national Governments and the international community.

## Note on the activities of FAO's Legal Office with particular reference to the implementation of the right to food

45. Where the right to food of adequate quality is concerned, a consolidation has been going forward in all industrialized countries, and in an increasing number of developing countries, of the provisions of food law dealing with the production, handling, preservation, transport and inspection aspects. The primary objective here is to protect the consumer, particularly where his health may be affected, and to secure fair trading. Practically all modern enactments having to do with food are evidence that consumer health protection is in the forefront of the legislator's concerns. In addition, modern food legislation, harmonized with that of the most advanced nations in this field and duly enforced, is often seen as an efficacious means of boosting a developing country's food exports.

46. In this context, a special place belongs to the Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission. The work of this body, with its - albeit indirect - influence on positive law, is producing concrete results. The progressive unification of technical standards and the harmonization of national rules are gradually removing technical obstacles affecting international trade in food. Despite the numerous technical and legal difficulties that this process entails, there is a distinct tendency towards homogeneity among various countries' food laws. This tendency redounds to the benefit of both the producer, who thus has access to wider markets, and the consumer, who is offered a wider choice of food items at prices within his reach.

47. With respect to food law, FAO has brought its efforts to bear on international harmonization, to this end developing and disseminating recommended standards, codes of practice, etc. It has promoted the adoption of laws providing for an effective food control without the need for top-heavy administrative arrangements, and for turning human and economic resources to good account.

48. In the context of those objectives, FAO collects and disseminates information in legislation. It maintains a central data bank consisting at present of approximately 125,000 legislative texts, indexed by subject and by country, responds to requests by Governments for legislative information and issues publications, including a semi-annual periodical Food and Agricultural Legislation.

49. FAO assembles and researches legislative documentation providing Member Nations with a basis for formulating their own laws in terms of a homogeneous and co-ordinated body of principles and in a way allowing social, economic, scientific and technological developments affecting food to be taken into account. In this way the resulting legislation will guarantee supplies of food that will be harmless and wholesome for both the home and export markets.

50. In this connection several Legislative Studies have been published on such subjects as food for infants and small children, and international trade in bovine meat. FAO is also making a study of joint ventures in the food sector and on the advantages to be expected from this novel formula for channelling capital, for technology transfer and longer-term contracts offering more stable arrangements for the producer.

51. Assistance and information has also been provided on food-related subjects: legislation on water - including the uses of this resource for irrigation - land use planning and the expansion of the land area under agriculture. All these matters have a direct or indirect bearing on food production; and the overall objective is to ensure the availability of the largest number of food items to all sectors of the population in FAO Member Nations and, at the same time, to restrain unfair trading at national and international levels whenever such practices redound to the detriment of the consumer or create obstacles to international commerce.

52. Finally, FAO maintains contacts and collaborates with the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations and other bodies concerned with the drafting of international instruments relating to the right to food.

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1986/38/Add.3
7 February 1986

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Forty-second session
Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

# QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION IN ALL COUNTRIES OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING:

# PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE RIGHT TO ENJOY AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING; THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

## Note by the Secretary-General

## Addendum

The present document contains the report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1985/42.

GE.86-10452/0630E

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

[20 January 1986]
[Original: English]

1. The Constitution of UNESCO recognizes in its article I that the purpose of the Organization is

> "... to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations" (para.1).

2. To realize this purpose, article I, paragraph 2, of the Constitution declares that the Organization will, inter alia:

> "Give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture;
>
> By collaborating with Members, at their request, in the development of educational activities;
>
> By instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social;
>
> By suggesting educational methods best suited to prepare the children of the world for the responsibilities of freedom."

3. The programmes with a view to realizing these objectives are the following:

(a) Implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (1960);

(b) Contribution of adult education and literacy to the implementation of the right to education;

(c) Implementation of the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education (1974);

(d) Examination of the cases and questions concerning the violation of human rights in the fields of competence of UNESCO (Decision 104 EX/3.3);

(e) Research on the effective exercise of human rights in specific socio-economic situations.

## A. Implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (1960)

4. The Convention against Discrimination in Education was adopted by the General Conference in December 1960. It is concerned not only with the elimination of discrimination but also with the adoption of measures to promote equality of educational opportunity and treatment. It is consequently inspired by two basic and separate principles, proclaimed in the Constitution of the Organization; but the undertaking of States differs in scope, depending on whether the question is one of discrimination or of equal opportunity. In

pursuance of article 3, the States assent to a number of specific obligations of immediate application with a view to eliminating and preventing all discrimination within the meaning of the Convention; abrogation or modification of legal texts, prohibition of differences of treatment, of preferences or restrictions in certain fields.

5. The Convention consequently provides for the formulation, development and application by States of a national policy tending to promote, by methods appropriate to the circumstances and to national usage, equality of opportunity and treatment in the matter of education.

6. At the same time the General Conference, to assist those States which might for some reason find difficulty in becoming parties to the Convention, adopted a Recommendation to member States substantially in the same terms as the Convention.

7. In December 1962 the General Conference adopted a Protocol to the Convention, providing for the setting up of a Conciliation and Good Offices Commission, with the responsibility of seeking the settlement of any dispute arising between States parties to the Convention. This Protocol, in respect of which by 26 July 1968, 15 States had deposited an instrument of ratification or acceptance, entered into force on 24 October 1968.

8. The Convention and Recommendation derive their inspiration from articles 2 and 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which declare that everyone has the right to education, in the ways and with the aims therein stated, and this without distinctions of any kind. In pursuance of the programme of work in this field, the Organization was invited by the competent bodies of the United Nations to establish a Convention against Discrimination in Education. Whilst the Organization desired to contribute to the implementation of article 2 of the Universal Declaration, which declares in substance that all discrimination is illegal, it desired as well to make a reality of the positive right of every person to education, which is laid down in article 26.

9. The elimination of all forms of discrimination, and the need to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in education, are two complementary aspects of the same educational objective. The Convention and Recommendation reflect well this double concern with the fight against discrimination on the one hand, and with the promotion of the right to education on the other. This may imply the adoption by member States of a series of legal measures and other actions to promote an educational policy such as will further the carrying out of the provisions of the Convention and Recommendation. The mention of this now is enough to show the fundamental importance and far-reaching nature of the clauses of the Convention and Recommendation, which surpass in these respects all other instruments drawn up by the Organization.

10. The means of implementation of the Convention and Recommendation must be examined against the background of the economic and social conditions obtaining in the member State concerned. The future sources of a nation's intelligence and of its capacities for development are its children and young people; and only if they are all given the chance to benefit from the educational opportunities available without discrimination of any kind can the nation hope to tap all its resources and fully realize its economic potential. Moreover, it is only as that economic potential comes to be realized that it will be possible to provide the budgetary resources needed for an educational system which can fully provide equal opportunities for all. Accordingly the Organization has been particularly concerned to promote

the development of education both quantitatively and qualitatively as an essential condition of economic and social development, closely geared to the opportunities for the effective employment of the young people so educated.

11. Under article VIII of the Constitution of the Organization every member State is required to report periodically (as determined by the appropriate Rules of Procedure) on the action it has taken upon recommendations and conventions. Further, article 7 of the Convention itself requires States parties to it to give the General Conference information on the legislative and administrative provisions which they have adopted and other action which they have taken for the application of the Convention. There is an equivalent clause in the Recommendation.

12. To date four consultations of member States on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education have been undertaken (1968-1985).

13. Pursuant to resolution 1/1.1/2 adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session in 1978, a report of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations regarding the Fourth Consultation of member States on the implementation of the above Convention was submitted to the General Conference at its twenty-third session in 1985. */ The report consists of (i) the Committee's analytical summary based on the reports presented by 84 member States (out of the 155 when the consultation was launched), of which 49 are parties to the Convention, (ii) the Committee's conclusions and recommendations including a proposed timetable for the Fifth Consultation, and (iii) four annexes. Annex D contains a summary of each of the 84 country reports received by 18 October 1985.

14. The Committee wished to draw the clearest possible conclusions as to the extent to which the provisions of the Convention and of the Recommendation have been applied and as to the progress achieved since the last consultation. However, it needs to be borne in mind that its judgements are based on the information provided by a minority of member States which, moreover, did not all participate in the previous consultations.

Discrimination

15. The Committee noted that with the sole exception of the report drawn up by the United Nations body responsible for Namibia all the replies received contain the assertion that there are no legal provisions or regulations providing for discrimination in education.

16. The Committee has, however, observed that certain situations described in some of the reports are of a discriminatory nature, although it has not always been possible to determine whether such situations result from a deficiency in the law or from specific infringements of it.

17. Furthermore, the Committee has noted that preferential measures have been taken for the benefit of underprivileged groups in some countries. As it has already indicated in its previous reports, it considers that the differences introduced for the purposes of protection and consisting, for example, in according preferential treatment to children from culturally underprivileged backgrounds are not discriminatory in the sense in which this term is used in

---

*/ See Document 23 C/72 August 1985.

the Convention and Recommendation, but on the contrary are some of the legitimate means of promoting equality of opportunity, in the spirit of the relevant provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its twentieth session.

Separate educational systems or establishments for students of the two sexes

18. The Committee was already of the opinion in its third report that it was possible to detect a gradual expansion of coeducation, especially at the primary and higher levels.

19. It would seem clear from the fourth consultation that this tendency has increased and that coeducation has been introduced in some countries where, for traditional or pedagogical reasons, separate education was the rule. In these countries coeducational institutions have appeared alongside single sex establishments, which have continued in existence mainly at the secondary level.

20. The Committee has also noted with satisfaction the efforts made by some developing States to achieve not only equal opportunity of access to education for both sexes and an improvement in the enrolment ratio of girls (which nevertheless still remains considerably lower than that of boys), but also equality as regards the courses of study available, the equipment and the qualifications of the staff when education is provided in separate establishments.

Private or denominational establishments

21. The Committee noted that there are private or denominational education establishments in most (55) of the States (74) which answered this question.

22. In many cases the replies from member States point out that the existence of private schools helps to compensate for the insufficient number of public educational institutions and that government subsidies are awarded to them in order to encourage their establishment and maintenance. A number of countries point out that the aim of private or denominational schools established on their territories is to provide additional educational facilities and not to exclude any particular group, and that their existence allows parents to exercise as a matter of priority their right to choose the kind of education they wish to give their children. However, one report says that the tuition fees charged in private education may be a factor of discrimination; another notes that some private schools practise segregation and a third indicates that where there is no State school available, a number of pupils are led to attend private schools which provide an ideologically oriented education.

23. The Committee also noted that where private or denominational establishments do exist they respect the principles set forth in the Convention and the Recommendation.

Equality of educational opportunity and treatment

24. The Committee was pleased to observe that all the replies received on this subject emphasized the unanimous wish of Governments or of the relevant authorities to achieve equality of opportunity and treatment in education.

25. It noted that in many countries this objective is contained in the Constitution or in legislation or has even already been achieved, and thus

there would be no point in reformulating or altering the policy to be followed for democratizing education.

26. The Committee also welcome the very detailed information contained in most of the replies, describing the measures already taken or planned by the Governments concerned to achieve equality of opportunity and treatment at the different levels of education.

Compulsory and free primary education

27. Despite improvements in the enrolment ratios in the vast majority of the countries, primary education has not been made compulsory and provided free of charge in a number of member States on account of a number of difficulties, which include not only the lack of financial resources, the shortage of teachers, shortages of educational equipment and facilities and the geographically scattered nature of the population, but also in some cases restrictions of a religious or traditional nature and even the opposition of parents who require the assistance of their children for agricultural or domestic work.

Generalization of secondary education

28. The Committee i pleased to note the progress which has been achieved by many member States towards the generalization of secondary education. The extension of compulsory schooling to cover the first phase or all the various phases of such education has been achieved in several countries; such schooling has been provided free of charge and this principle has often been extended to cover textbooks, meals, clothing and even the provision of accommodation for pupils in some States. The considerable increase achieved over 10 years in enrolment ratios for the child population as a whole in the case of Benin or for the culturally underprivileged aboriginal groups in the case of Australia reveal the success of the efforts undertaken by the Governments concerned.

29. The Committee also noted with interest the attention given by many member States to achieving a fair balance between general secondary education and vocational and professional training in order to create a better preparation for working life and take into account socio-economic conditions and the needs of the labour market.

30. The reports of several States mention the difficulties which they have encountered in their efforts to generalize secondary education: inadequacy of financial resources, shortages of teachers, lack of premises and equipment and the scattered nature of the population.

Access to higher education

31. The Committee noted in its previous report "that hgher education is going through a period of remarkable development in most countries, reflected both in the creation of new universities and in the spectacular influx of higher education candidates". Most of the replies received indicate that this growth has further increased during the past decade. For example, in only 10 years university enrolments in Benin have increased tenfold and they have increased considerably or notably in Brazil, the Federal Republic of Germany, Norway, the Republic of Korea and Switzerland, among other countries. New higher education establishments have been set up in several countries and a decentralization effort is under way in certain States with a view to making access to higher education easier for population groups far away from the

metropolitan countries and major cities, through improved geographical distribution.

32. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the growth in higher education is accompanied in several countries by better access to this level of education for hitherto disadvantaged population categories. It noted the information contained in certain reports stressing that the proportion of minorities in the student population has improved considerably, or that the number of female students is about to reach, as in Poland, or even overtake, as in the United States, that of male students.

33. Free education is an important factor in equality of opportunity and the Committee noted with satisfaction that it had been extended to higher education in many countries. It also noted, however, that the cost of registration and tuition fees in several States was too high and that it hampered access by many candidates to this level of education.

34. The granting of fellowships and loans to students offsets these difficulties to a certain extent, and the Committee noted with interest information providing details, in the reports received, of financial assistance and other facilities granted to students in order to meet both their registration and tuition fees and their maintenance expenses.

Adult education and continuing education

35. The Committee was happy to note the interest shown by all the 58 Governments which replied to this part of the questionnaire on the struggle against illiteracy. During the past 12 years, and particularly since the last consultation of member States, major strides have been made in this field and the illiteracy rate has fallen markedly in many countries.

36. The Committee further noted that the efforts of the Governments concerned were not limited merely to providing literacy training for persons who had not received any primary education and that craft or vocational training taking employment needs into account had been organized in most cases. In any case, adult education is not restricted to the primary level. Continuing education leading to or even including higher education has been organized in many countries.

37. The general conclusion drawn by the Committee from the reports received is encouraging. Greater participation by member States in this fourth consultation, as well as the number and quality of replies from countries in regions that took virtually no part in previous consultations, are clear signs of the interest taken by member States, particularly developing States, in the implementation of the 1960 Convention and Recommendation.

38. The reports received also bear witness to the efforts States have made to combat discrimination and to bring about equality of educational opportunity and treatment. The Committee was pleased to record the progress achieved since the last consultation, particularly with regard to the provision of free primary education for all and the improvement of school attendance among girls despite the difficulties encountered by certain countries. It was also pleased to note that the efforts made by States with a view to generalizing secondary education and achieving equal opportunity of access to higher education have been reflected in the last decade in a substantial increase in enrolments at these two levels. Lastly, the Committee noted with satisfaction the drop in the illiteracy rate in many countries.

39. The Committee will meet again towards the end of 1990 or early in 1991 to study all the documentation received and to draft its report.

40. The Executive Board will make its comments on that report in the spring of 1991; comments and reports will then be submitted to the General Conference at its twenty-sixth session.

B. Contribution of adult education and literacy to the implementation of the right to education

41. Literacy work and adult education programmes have, since the creation of UNESCO 40 years ago, been intentionally and carefully planned and undertaken with the aim of extending and improving the access of all to initial and continuing education. As such, the Organization's work in these fields has explicitly sought the tangible implementation of the right to education as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

42. Recommendation on the development of adult education was adopted by the General Conference at its nineteenth session in 1976 (the text is attached as annex II). 1/

43. Literacy work is at present being carried out according to a global strategy, adopted by member States in the framework of the Organization's Second Medium-Term Plan (1984-1989). On the one hand, action for the extension and renovation of primary education is designed to bring better educational grounding to more children in schools. On the other hand, outside the school, activities are undertaken to intensify the struggle for literacy not only among adults but also among young people who have had insufficient or no schooling.

44. In its adult education programmes, UNESCO strives to promote the spread and amelioration of education not only as an end in itself, but also as a means of helping ensure the active and full exercise of other human rights, including the right to work, to culture and to civic participation. The concern of these activities for human rights recently found firm expression in the proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Adult Education which declared the following:

> "Recognition of the right to learn is now more than ever a major challenge for humanity.
>
> The right to learn is:
>
> The right to read and write;
>
> The right to question and analyse;
>
> The right to imagine and create;
>
> The right to read one's own world and to write history;
>
> The right to have access to educational resources;
>
> The right to develop individual and collective skills.

---

1/ Available for consultation in the Secretariat files.

The Paris Conference on Adult Education reaffirms the importance of this right.

The right to learn is not a cultural luxury to be saved for some future date.

It is not a right that will come only after the question of survival has been settled.

It is not the next step to be taken once basic needs have been satisfied.

The right to learn is an indispensable tool for the survival of humanity.

If we want the peoples of the world to be self-sufficient in food production and other essential human needs, they must have the right to learn.

If women and men are to enjoy better health, they must have the right to learn.

If we are to avoid war, we must learn to live in peace, and learn to understand one another.

'Learn' is the key word.

There can be no human development without the right to learn.

There will be no breakthroughs in agriculture and industry, no progress in community health, and, indeed, no change in learning conditions without the right to learn.

Without this right there will be no improvements in the standard of living for workers in our cities and villages.

In short, the right to learn is one of the best contributions we can make to solving t'e crucial problems of humanity today.

But the right to learn is not only an instrument of economic development, it must be recognized as one of the fundamental rights. The act of learning, lying as it does at the heart of all educational activity, changes human beings from objects at the mercy of events to subjects who create their own history.

It is a fundamental human right whose legitimacy is universal. The right to learn cannot be confined to one section of humanity, it must not be the exclusive privilege of men, or of the industrialized countries, or the wealthy classes, or those young people fortunate enough to receive schooling. The Paris Conference calls on all countries to imlement this right and to create the necessary conditions for its effective exercise by all, by making available all necessary human and material resources, rethinking education systems along more equitable lines, and, finally, drawing on the resources that have been successfully developed by various communities.

We urge all organizations both governmental and non-governmental, to work with the United Nations, UNESCO and other specialized agencies to promote this right on a world scale.

In spite of the great progress in adult education that has been recorded at consecutive UNESCO Conferences, in Elsinore, Montreal, Tokyo and Paris, the chasm has not narrowed between, on the one hand, the scale and complexity of the problems, and, on the other, the ability of individuals and groups to find appropriate solutions.

The Fourth International Conference on Adult Education, meeting at UNESCO headquarters in March 1985, repeats the appeal made at previous conferences, calling on all countries, despite or indeed because of the scale of contemporary problems, to make a determined and imaginative effort to bring about the intensive and specific development of adult education activities, so that women and men, both individually and collectively, can equip themselves with the education, cultural, scientific and technological resources necessary for a type of development whose aims, requirements and practical procedures they themselves will have chosen.

This Conference recognizes and acclaims the energy and the trends in human relations that women and their organizations have contributed. Their specific experiences and methods are central to the fundamental issues on which the future of humanity depends, such as peace and equality between women and men. This being the case, women's participation is essential in the development of adult education and in plans to bring about a more humane society.

Who will decide what humanity will become in the future? This is the question facing all Governments, non-governmental organizations, individuals and groups. This, too, is the question facing the women and men who are working in adult education and who seek to enable all people, ranging from individuals to groups to humanity as a whole, to gain control of themselves and of their own destiny."

45. It should, furthermore, be pointed out that every effort is made within the literacy and adult education activities of UNESCO to make a special place for certain groups subject to de facto educational discrimination and thus deprived of their rights in this regard. These groups include women, youth, the handicapped and the aged, inter alia.

## C. Implementation of the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education (1974)

46. The UNESCO Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education, adopted by the General Conference in 1974, considers technical and vocational education as a part of the overall educational process which should be made available to all persons without discrimination. This instrument makes special provision for equal technical and vocational education opportunities for women (para. 27), for out-of-school and unemployed youth and children of migrant workers as well as for those not entering education or training programmes after completion of compulsory schooling (para. 28) and for the physically and mentally disadvantaged (para. 29).

47. The Revised Recommendation has been extensively used as a background document for regional seminars and workshops organized by UNESCO in the field

of technical and vocational education. A number of case studies concerning the development of technical and vocational education in member States have been prepared based on this instrument.

48. In conformity with resolution 25 adopted by the General Conference in 1983, a draft questionnaire has been prepared to be used by member States to report on their implementation of the Revised Recommendation. The questionnaire will be sent to member States by the end of 1985 and analytical summaries of the reports will be prepared and submitted to the General Conference in 1987.

D. Examination of the cases and questions concerning the violation of human rights in the fields of competence of UNESCO (Decision 104 EX/3.3)

49. Pursuant to decision 3.3 of the Executive Board at its 104th session, the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations examined communications received by the Organization concerning cases and questions of violations of human rights within the fields of competence of UNESCO in accordance with the procedures defined in the above decision (the text of the decision is attached in annex IV). 2/

E. Research on the effective exercise of human rights in specific socio-economic situations

50. Pursuant to the Work Plan of the Approved Programme and Budget for 1984-1985 and within the framework of Subprogramme XIII.2.2 - The effective exercise of human rights in specific social and economic conditions, UNESCO organized an international meeting of experts on ways and means of improving the effective exercise of human rights of disadvantaged social groups which took place in Quebec (Canada) from 9 to 12 December 1985.

51. This meeting, which was organized in collaboration with the Canadian National Commission for UNESCO, brought together anthropologists, historians, lawyers and economists with a view to their suggesting means of improving the action taken in favour of disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minorities, the unemployed, refugees, migrants, handicapped persons and the elderly.

52. A series of studies were carried out in preparation for this meeting, two of which, of a general character, were prepared by the International Commission of Jurists and Laval University, Canada. In addition, eight case studies have been prepared on the unemployed and migrants in Italy and the Syrian Arab Republic, handicapped persons in Canada and in Yugoslavia, elderly people in the United States of America and in Ghana and the poor in India and in Argentina.

53. The experts recommended that UNESCO action in this field be increased and that disadvantaged groups be associated in the action-oriented studies and research to be undertaken by the Organization.

54. Finally, within the framework of Subprogramme XII.2.1 - Standard setting action in support of the struggle against prejudice, intolerance and racism, UNESCO is organizing a regional seminar to study the extent to which the means of redress provided for in the existing instruments concerning the struggle against prejudice, intolerance and racism have already been used by the most disadvantaged groups.

---

2/ Available for consultation in the Secretariat files.

55. This meeting which will be organized under contract with the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, will take place in Bueons Aires from 17 to 20 March 1986.

56. The United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities will be informed in due course of the work done under these subprogrammes.